UNITY

An Organ of Reasonable Religion.

"One God, one law, one element,
And one far-off divine event
To which the whole creation moves."—*Tennyson.*

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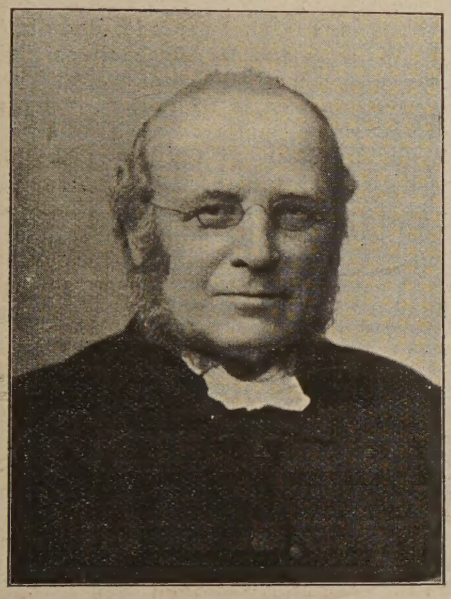

DR. BROOKE HERFORD.

Born at Altrincham, 1830. Educated at Rev. J. R. Beard's School. Apprenticed to business. Teacher at Lower Mosley Schools, Manchester, in contact with Travers Madge, and resolved to become a minister. Educated for the ministry at Manchester New College, 1848-1851. Unitarian minister at Todmorden, 1851-6; Sheffield, Upper Chapel, 1856-64; Strangeways, Bridge Street Chapel, 1864-1875. A joint editor of "The Unitarian Herald" with the Rev. W. Gaskell, M.A., and Missionary Tutor, Unitarian Home Missionary Board. Removed to Church of the Messiah, Chicago, U.S.A., 1875-1882; Arlington Street Church, Boston, U.S.A., 1882-1892; Harvard University preacher, 1890-92; degree of D.D. of Harvard, 1892; returned to England, Rosslyn Hill Chapel, Hampstead, London, 1892-1903; President, British and Foreign Unitarian Association, 1898; died December 20th, 1903.

Author of "Home Pages" tracts, "The Life of Travers Madge," "The Story of Religion in England," volumes of sermons entitled "Courage and Cheer," "The Small End of Great Problems," "Anchors of the Soul," and some discourses on "The Forward Movement in Religious Thought as interpreted by Unitarians." In America Dr. Herford jointly with the Rev. J. T. Sunderland, M.A., started "The Unitarian" (1886), an excellent monthly magazine. There, as in England, he was a man of great practical ability. As a preacher his power was unique in convincing common sense and genial persuasiveness, expressed in plain and simple yet graceful language. Separate biographical sketches of him by the Rev. P. H. Wicksteed, M.A., and the Rev. John Cuckson, have been published.

Varieties.

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul according well,
May make one music as before,
But vaster. —Tennyson.

The popular theology, in its ascetic rules, goes to an extreme, and does great injustice It counts the body mean, calls it vile, says that therein dwells no good thing. It mortifies the flesh, crucifies the affections thereof. But the body is not vile. Did not the infinite Father make it—not a limb too much, not a passion too many? God make anything vile! and least of all this, which is the consummation of His outward workmanship—the frame of man! Far from us be the thought.

—Theodore Parker.

We consider bibles and religions divine—I do not say they are divine;
I say they have all grown out of you, and may grow out of you still;
It is not they who give the life, it is you who give the life;
Leaves are not more shed from the trees, or trees from the earth, than they are shed out of you.

—Walt Whitman.

"You must live each day at your very best;
The work of the world is done by few;
God asks that a part be done by you."

Marks of the Free.

Tell me what the signs may be
Which for ever mark the free.

First they love all living things
Humbly,—yet as proud as kings;

Then of man they think no ill,
Let him do whatever he will.

And this shows their freedom, too,
That they grant the same to you.

Neither are they filled with woe
Over those who ripen slow,

For they know that, in the prime
Of the spirit's harvest time,

Comes to every soul the hour
When it opens like a flower,

While the universe stands by,
Ever ready to supply

Lovingly its magic aid,—
Never hurried, never stayed.

Lastly, thus we know the free,
That they live right openly,

For they deem it grievous sin
To secrete the truth within.

Each of these is freedom's sign,
How I wish that it were mine!

—Ernest Crosby.

"Ism" and "Ology."

Our welcome exchange, "The Message," edited by Revs. Hugh C. Wallace and J. Warschauer, M.A., D.Phil., has a note in its May issue under the heading of "Ism," in which it falls foul of Dr. M. J. Savage for his saying that "the word Unitarian was significant, and significant of an important idea or fact, while the words Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Episcopalian, failed to express anything of equal importance"; and styles this as "the merest sectarian label-worship," and considers it is "humorous" to suggest that the word "Catholic" is any less significant than "Unitarian."

Well, it is possible that even Dr. Savage knows what these words mean, as well as something of their history and associations, and it may be that he is right, and has sufficient reason for what he says. Let him speak for himself: "I am proud of the name Unitarian. It is the grandest name in Christendom. The names of other religious bodies have little or no religious significance. They relate to forms of government, or may be merely a nickname, like Methodist. They tell nothing of what their bearers stand for. Unitarianism is the most significant name in the modern world. It means unity of life, unity of truth, unity of religious aim, unity of endeavour."

Now, what about the word "Catholic," which means—Universal? Is there anything in that which is not in "Unitarian"? Does not "Unitarian" mean a faith which conceives the whole as one—that God is one, the universe and all it contains is one, all parts of one stupendous whole? Could there be anything more universal, more catholic? But it is catholic in a much larger sense than has ever yet been associated with the word "Catholic," and many of the past associations with that word make it an undesirable name to the majority of Protestants. And can any people with a "message" fulfil their mission without a label, without definite identity? They must have a name, whether it be that of "The Message People," or "New Theologians," or "Free Catholics." But even "Ism" is better than "Ology," for Unitarianism contains all the "New Theology" of our "Message" friends, and more of it than they are yet prepared to teach.

"Unity" is also taken to task for describing Mr. Rhondda Williams and Dr. Rashdall as men who "do not wish to be called Unitarians, and yet cannot be correctly named as Trinitarians in the proper sense of that term"; and we are told that we might concede that Dr. Rashdall and others like him are the best judges as to whether they are correctly described by the name "Trinitarian." We agree that Unitarians claim to be the best judges of the meaning of their own name—of what it means to them collectively—and we are ready to concede the same to Trinitarians as to what "Trinitarian" means to them collectively, and this meaning they express in their standards of doctrine. But if any so-called "Trinitarian" departs from those standards, and advocates a "New Theology" which is not the same as that of the Trinitarian standards, he is not a Trinitarian in the accepted and recognised sense of that term, even though he deem himself so by private interpretation.

We are glad to find ourselves in full sympathy with much that "The Message" contains, and Unitarians cannot do otherwise than wish success to its promoters in their efforts to propagate a more humane and reasonable theology than that prevalent in most of the orthodox churches.

Jesus Redivivus.

By the Rev. A. CUNLIFFE FOX, B.A.

VI.—JESUS IN THE TEMPLE.

Jesus was a Jew, and, from the manger to the cross, he remained a Jew.

There is nothing in the gospel-narrative, rightly understood, to indicate that he ever took up an attitude of active and uncompromising hostility towards the National Church, or that he kept aloof from its religious observances. Without doubt he had been reared under the shadow of its wings, and from the years of childhood had been quite at home in its theology and ritual. Overlooking such biographical fragments as Luke ii., 41 . . . 51, the historical value of which may be open to question, we may safely assume that Jesus had grown up in a religious environment, which home and synagogue

and temple had jointly and together provided, and of which he was in some degree the creature. In the adult man we behold the fruit of thirty years of such training. Parents, teachers, and companions had their share in the moulding of his character as of every other. Whether a different man would have emerged from a different environment, we need not linger to discuss. It is enough that from his own particular environment Jesus emerged.

We may say further than in later life he did not depart from the way in which he had been trained up to go. He acquired a religious habit, and the religious habit remained with him. The piety of his soul found expression in acts of worship, the customary and authorised acts of the times. As a boy he frequented the synagogue of his native village, along with and under the directions of his parents. He did not desert it as a man, when he was free to go his own way. When the call came to him to teach, the synagogue offered him an open door. And he went in, "as his custom was, on the Sabbath Day, and stood up to read" (Luke iv., 16), and to expound his people's Scriptures with help of the rich stores of wisdom and experience which he had garnered there.

Nor was he a stranger to the much more pretentious sanctuary at Jerusalem, and to the much more elaborate ritual which might be witnessed there. We may assume that he had made many pilgrimages to the holy city before that memorable journey which brought him to Calvary, nor had ever omitted on any such visit to renew his acquaintance with the national shrine. Glad was his heart to hear his father say, "Let us go unto the house of the Lord." Of that we may be quite sure. No devout Jew could feel otherwise, and Jesus was not only a Jew, but an extraordinarily devout one.

And so there grew up in the young man's soul a profound attachment to the religion of his fathers, to its sacred writings, to its institutions, to its modes of public expression. Loyal recognition of the authority of its law, deep reverence for the spirit of its prophets, genuine respect for its traditions, joyous participation in its appointed feasts, real assimilation in his own thought and feeling of its faith, aspiration, and hope—all this we may read on and between the lines of the gospel story. By conviction, in sympathy, and in practice, he was a true son of Israel. We have his own word for it. At any rate, it is given as his.

I. In reference to the Mosaic Law: (a) "The Scribes and Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; all things, therefore, whatsoever they bid you, these do and observe" (Mt. xxiii., 2-3). (b) "These ye ought to have to done, and not to have left the other undone" (Mt. xxiii., 23). (c) "I came not to destroy, but to fulfil" (Mt. v., 17). (d) "If thou wouldest enter into life keep the Commandments" (Mt. xix., 17).

II. Of the Temple: "It is written, My house shall be called a house of prayer" (Mt. xxi., 13).

III. Of the institution of sacrifice: "Then come and offer thy gift," i.e., "at the altar" (Mt. v., 24).

IV. Of feasts: (a) "Go and make ready for us the passover" (Lk. xxii., 8). (b) "With desire I have desired to eat this passover with you" (Ib., verse 15).

V. Of the Messianic hope: (a) "When the son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Mt. xix., 28. Cf. Mk. x., 35-40). (b) "There be some here . . . . which shall in no wise taste of death till they see the kingdom of God come with power" (Mk. ix., 1).

These and many other passages, if they bear true record, prove that there was no intentional rupture on the part of Jesus with the religion of the temple and the synagogue, that, on the contrary indeed, certain transient elements derived from his spiritual environment persisted in his own thought and practice. Of course, it is always open to throw doubt upon the accuracy of the report, and, by a sufficiently extensive use of the critical scissors, to eliminate every limitation of a national or sectarian character, and so obtain a likeness of our ideal portrait. And for a good deal of such excision there may really be very valid grounds. At the same time let us not forget that it is a method capable of cutting both ways, which, while it may indeed remove the supposed blemishes, will hardly leave untouched the undoubted graces of this remarkable personality.

The task of deciphering the real Jesus is extraordinarily difficult, and, from the point of view of the infallibility of the witnesses, not only difficult but quite impossible. How shall we ever reconcile the conflicting impressions of his teaching which these witnessed have placed on record?

Was Jesus a slave of the temple and of its law? Or, while continuing to give his allegiance to both, did he assume the attitude of a candid friend? What was the exact degree of his Conformity, or of his Nonconformity? The doctrine of infallibility will never help us to settle that, for in the narratives to which it attaches there is ample evidence for the extreme position on both sides. And as the evidence varies, Jesus may be regarded either as excessively strict or as excessively lax in his Judaism. But Jew he was and remained even in his laxity, as we shall endeavour to show in the sequel. The other side of him, and some would say the better side, is still distinctly Jewish, or was derived from Judaism. Even his heterodoxy was, in a manner of speaking, and historically considered, orthodox.

(To be continued.)

"Together" is the central word of the Gospel. As fast and as far as men are enlightened by its spirit, so fast and so far do they dislike lonely duty and scorn lonely pleasure.—E. E. Hale.

All actual heroes are essential men,
And all men possible heroes.

—Mrs. Browning.

What is Unitarianism?

The Unitarian position is, in its main principle, extremely simple. It is Christ's. God reveals Himself to His children, and what that revelation is they must learn by using the faculties with which He has endowed them. The Unitarian is frankly a rationalist, a religious rationalist since his reason leads him to God, and to the knowledge of the Divine truth and will. He does not reject off-hand all the great teachers of the past have taught, nor the faiths which have become crystallised in the many creeds. He rather gratefully seeks to familiarise himself with this, as one of the best helps to personal conviction. But his attitude is that not of one who simply yields to authority and believes as he is bidden; rather is it that of the intelligent and independent disciple who, sitting at the feet of the masters, hears, and judges for himself, exercises his own mind, and forms his own conclusions. The faith by which he is to live, which is to satisfy and inspire him, must be his own, a vital personal conviction. He is sure that this is the method which, however iconoclastic of old beliefs, is most reverential, and by which alone religion can become a permanent reality in the life of man. What he is really concerned about is, not so much what God said to the prophets of old, but what he is saying to him to-day, and to that modern society, with its immediate problems and difficulties, of which he forms a part. To this the prophets may help him; this they cannot give him. He must find it for himself. And so, accepting to the full the principle of development, the Unitarians' faith must always be modern, living, actual.

—A. A. CHARLESWORTH.

Democratic Immortality.

By Rev. FRANK WALTERS.

The Christian doctrine of immortality is charged with democratic issues, far-reaching and stupendous; it promises no aristocratic heaven, where the elite of the race shall be gathered to enjoy the reserved seats in a celestial court; it opens up a universal destiny for all the masses of mankind. I have heard some people say that they can quite easily believe in the immortality of Plato and Shakspere. It is almost impossible to conceive that, for such mighty souls, death means oblivion and annihilation; but they feel that the difficult matter is to believe that every soul, in these crowds of ignorant and obscure men and women, will survive its earthly lot. But, to a large extent, it is the condition of these obscure, ignorant creatures, that suggests this solution of the problem. We cannot help asking "Is there no better fate, no ampler destiny, for them in another world?" The woman who mourns over the babe that only gasped one breath of mortal air, feels that the fate of her child is as important as the destiny of a Plato or a Shakspere. This wonderful promise comes to the poor, the sad, the unprivileged, the obscure. I remember the pathetic words of Jesus, "It is not the will of my Father that one of these little ones should perish"; and by "little ones" he meant, not only children, but humble men and women, who have been rejected by the proud and great. "In God's heaven," says the gracious Master, "there is room for all these." The immortal hope is not merely for saints and sages, for heroes and prophets and philosophers; it is for the multitude of "little ones," who have been heavily weighted in the race of life, who have never been able to make the best of themselves under the warping conditions of an earthly existence. It is for these that conscience prophesies a future, and claims a catholic immortality in the name of eternal justice.

Book Notices.

"Memorable Unitarians," 440 pages, 2s. 6d. net, The British and Foreign Unitarian Association, Essex Hall, Essex Street, London, W.C.; also by same publishers, "Sermons by Unitarian Ministers," Nos. 16-19, One Penny; "Spiritual Religion," by Arthur W. Fox, M.A.; "The Parable of the Talents," by William Wooding, B.A.; "A Revaluation of Values," by J. J. Wright, F.R.S.L.; "Ability and Sympathy," by Alfred Hall, M.A.

"James Martineau," by Alfred Hall, M.A., 106 pages, with portrait, 1s. net, Sunday School Association, Essex Hall, Essex Street, London, W.C.; "George Smith of Coalville, a Modern Knight Errant," by J. E. Brown, 83 pages, 8d. net, same publishers; also "The Sunday School Code Book and Teachers' Manual," 140 pages, 9d. net.

"Memorable Unitarians" is a series of brief biographical sketches beginning with Ulfilas the Apostle of the Goths, and coming down to Frances Power Cobbe and James Martineau, but recently deceased. There are 154 more or less well-known Unitarians noticed. According to the preface this work is a revised and extended form of the "Record of Unitarian Worthies," published by the late Rev. Robert Spears, and long since out of print. No pretension is made that it is anything like a complete record of Memorable Unitarians. In the concluding chapter it is admitted that owing to the limits of space many memorable lives remain unchronicled in this volume. Consequently, though we have here an account of Frances Power Cobbe, who died so recently as April, 1904, there is no mention of Brooke Herford, who passed away in December, 1903. The biographical sketches are necessarily brief, and it would have increased the value of the book if in each case references to fuller biographical details had been given. The sketches do not appear in strict chronological order. But the book makes more accessible information concerning Unitarians whose fame extended far beyond those who had knowledge of their Unitarianism; it is a valuable addition to Unitarian literature; certainly every chapel or Sunday school library connected with a Unitarian Church ought to contain a copy, and it is a volume

which many Unitarians and others will be glad to possess.

The four sermons by Unitarian ministers more than sustain the excellent quality of the series to which they belong. Mr. Fox clearly explains what Spiritual Religion is, and how it may be developed; Mr. Wooding's exposition of the Parable of the Talents includes an interesting discussion of the problem of equality; Mr. Wright's discourse shows in an able and characteristic manner that many persons and things regarded as of first importance are really of the last, and so a "Revaluation of Values" is often necessary; and Mr. Alfred Hall succeeds well in making it plain that Ability is largely dependent on Sympathy, not the sympathy of the doer only, but that of others among whom and for whom work is done—"Men can, because others think they can," being the truth specially emphasised.

The Sunday School Association has done well to publish Mr. Alfred Hall's handy little biography of "James Martineau" especially for young people, and older people who have not time to read the larger biographies by Dr. Drummond and Professor Carpenter. It is no mere outline or sketch, but an interesting story consisting of ten chapters relating ancestry, birth, life, character, and work of James Martineau up to his death. Mr. Brown describes his hero "George Smith of Coalville" as "this true-hearted knight-errant," and dedicates the instructive account here given of him "to all admirers of chivalrous deeds and self-forgetful work for the welfare of humanity," George Smith's special public service having been in behalf of neglected children living in canal boats and in gipsy vans, and those working in brickyards. This short story of a noble man and his labours to succour oppressed little ones is a fine appeal to the noblest sympathies of all people, whether young or old, and is particularly fitted for use among the young people of Sunday Schools, whether in class or in the home.

Every Sunday School worker ought to possess a copy of "The Sunday School Code Book and Teachers' Manual"; certainly no Sunday School official or member of School Committee should be without it. It is a handbook containing practical hints for every department of Sunday School activity, suggestions and information concerning Sunday School institutions, of which as many as seventeen are described, and the concluding portion of the book deals with the subject of "Aids to Teachers." It would be money well spent in every Sunday School if copies were purchased to be given to the teachers, to increase their interest in their work, and supply them with valuable information as to how it can best be done.

Notes and News.

There was a distinct feeling in the minds of many present at the meetings of the National Conference at Oxford that there were two parties—one strongly for the definite Unitarian position in its widest and latest interpretation,—the other opposed to the raising of the "Unitarian" flag, and eager for a doctrinally indefinite "Free Catholic" position; and that the first pulsations of a struggle for predominance between these two were being then experienced.

The Unitarian Van started on its mission on Monday morning, May 14th, for work at Lymm, near Warrington, and at Earlestown. Before the July issue of "Unity" it will be possible to give some account of the first month's operations.

The Rev. H. Rawlings, of Hackney, advertises his services as "Unitarian, but for unity of spirit rather than of opinion."

Twenty-six young people of the Sunday School have been welcomed into membership of Chowbent (Unitarian) Congregation on Easter Sunday, by the Rev. J. J. Wright.

A special effort is being made by the friends of the Burnley Lane Mission Church, Burnley, towards a Sale of Work in support of a building fund for a new church building, in place of the cottage rooms occupied at present. Secretary, P. J. Hargreaves, 77, Byerden Lane, Burnley.

The Rev. F. B. Mott has recently in a series of discourses on "Reasonable Questions" preached on the subject, "Should religion be taught in our schools?" and in so doing made comparison between the teaching of the Established Church and the doctrines of the Unitarians, with special reference to the Church of England Catechism as taught in the public schools.

A new Unitarian Church has been opened at Ansdell, near Lytham.

The Baptist Union has altered a doctrinal clause in its constitution from "Our Lord Jesus Christ is the sole and absolute authority" to "Our God and Saviour Jesus Christ is," etc.

The foundation stone of the new Unitarian Church building at Ashton-under-Lyne was laid on Saturday, April 28th, in the presence of a large assembly of people, and in a snowstorm.

The Unitarian services at Cambridge have commenced with Professor Estlin Carpenter, of Oxford, as preacher, and a large congregation.

The annual meetings of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, and the Sunday School Association, to be held as usual in London during Whit-week, bid fair to be of more than usual interest, and large attendances are anticipated.

Of 21,580 in prisons in England, Wales and Scotland on March 28th last, the declared religious denominations of the prisoners were: Church of England, 16,089; Roman Catholics, 4,397; Wesleyans, 352; Jews, 257; Baptists, 132; Presbyterians, 79; Primitive Methodists, 65; Congregationalists, 53; Calvinistic Methodists, 29; Unitarians, 13; Salvation Army, 11; Bible Christians, 8; besides 22 Atheists, 26 no religion; Mohammedans or Buddhists, 3; Plymouth Brethren, Quakers, Christian Brethren, Waldensians, and Spiritualists, 1 each; of one prisoner suffering from delirium his religion could not be ascertained. Indifferent persons when asked often claim to belong to the Church of England.

HOME CIRCLE.

"Take this lesson to your heart,
Take it, and hold it fast—
The mill will never grind
With the water that is past."

A Drop of Oil.

Bang! Slam! Every time anyone went in or out of the front door they had to slam it with such force as to disturb the whole house. It made grandma drop stitches in her knitting; woke the baby in its sleep; and caused aunt's head to ache. We had moved into a new house, and this door caused all the bother. Uncle came to see us, and he heard the door bang twice, and sprang to his feet, saying: "Fred, my boy, get your mother's oil can for me." He dropped two or three drops in the lock, worked it with the key once or twice, and then shut the door quietly. What a change! "Always try oil, Fred, and it will make things work wonderfully smooth," was uncle's advice. People as well as locks need oiling. The only thing to preserve peace and quietness is the oil of kindness. Try it, and see if it does not act well.

Do not be selfish. Consider others.

Little Jasper played with two forks at the dinner-table. He knocked them together and made a noise that was unpleasant to all at the table.

"Jasper, please do not make that noise," said his mother.

"I like the music," replied Jasper.

"Yes, my dear, but we do not," said his mother.

Ought we not to consider what others like as well as ourselves?

Randal's Principle—*continued.*

CHAPTER V.

"I tell you, sir, it is nothing of the kind. You are under a wrong impression, and have a wrong idea about it altogether."

"How do you know? Have you been to any of their meetings? I can tell you this—that as soon as anyone becomes interested in what they have to say and teach he gives up his belief in the triune God, in Christ's substitution, in the power of Satan, in the miracles, and in the natural sinfulness of the human soul. Does not that mean that he becomes an unbeliever and infidel? Of course it does!"

"I repeat, sir, that you are wrong in saying that this new teaching is infidelity; or that it leads to atheism. It strengthens a man's faith in God, and does not destroy it, and increases belief in religion and in Christ instead of lessening it. You have evidently been misinformed."

This dialogue was going on between Randal Wray and one of his past Sunday School teachers at the Ebenezer Sunday School. Randal had taken a stroll into the fields outside the town, a book for his only companion, and this teacher acquaintance met him, and in course of talk found that Randal's book was entitled "Unitarian Christianity most favourable to Piety," by William Ellery Channing, D.D., of Boston, Mass. And it was the title of the book which provoked the discussion, the teacher, Mr. Saunders, asserting that "Unitarianism is Infidelity."

"But, Randal, you are wrong if you say that Unitarianism does not produce unbelief. I know that it causes men to give up belief in Satan, in hell, in the fall of Man in Adam, in Predestination and Election, and in a host of other religious doctrines; for people who did believe these things through Unitarian teaching now deny them."

"I grant," said Randal, "that what you have just said is true. But Unitarianism only promotes unbelief in Protestant error, just as Protestantism promotes unbelief in Romish error. Would you think it just, if a Roman Catholic came to you and said that your Protestantism makes men unbelievers and infidels, and leads to atheism? And yet you are not a believer in worship to the Virgin Mary, or in prayers to the Saints, or in Absolution by a priest, or that the bread and wine in the Sacrament are changed by the Mass into the real body and blood of Christ. You are an unbeliever in these things, and your Protestantism makes "unbelievers" in and "infidels" to these things. And yet you believe in God in your way, and in religion, and in Christ—as much as—perhaps you think more than—they do. And so Unitarians give up belief in what they think are your errors, and yet they consider they have more belief in God and Christ and religion than they could have when they were like you."

This statement seemed to make Mr. Saunders a bit uncomfortable.

"You really mean, Randal, that a Protestant like me is as much an 'unbeliever' to the Roman Catholic as a Unitarian is to me, and that the belief in Satan is as much an error as a belief in Absolution by a priest?"

"Yes, that is what I do mean."

"Do you deny the existence of Satan?"

"I do, most decidedly. I believe that there is no Satan or personal devil except evil-minded human beings."

"Good gracious! You are more of a Unitarian than I thought. But I shall have to see you again some other time, as I must now be going." And with these words Mr. Saunders shook hands and departed.

(To be continued.)

He findeth not, who seeks his own,
The soul is lost that's saved alone.

—Whittier.

Queries.

Readers desiring information or seeking light may have their questions answered in this department of "Unity" by sending their queries to the Editor. If sent not later than the 18th of the month they may be answered in next issue.

1. ELDER SCHOLAR.—Do Unitarians believe in the resurrection of the fleshly body after death?—No; but they believe in the resurrection of the soul or spirit of man when the fleshly body perishes.

2. NATIONAL CONFERENCE.—Is the National Conference of Unitarian Churches the central governing authority of the Unitarian denomination?—It is not. It does not seek to be. The most prominent men in the National Conference—some of them—do not want to have a Unitarian denomination at all, but one with an indefinite name. The Conference is only a conference. There is no central governing authority of Unitarian Churches; they are self-governing and free.

3. RECENT CONVERT.—How can I get literature explaining Unitarian doctrines?—Write to the Secretary of the British and Foreign Unitarian Association, Essex Hall, London, for a catalogue of Unitarian books, tracts, etc., from which you can select; see also Vol. II. of "Unity," which is a helpful Handbook of Unitarianism, price 1s.; and "Unity," monthly 1d., by post 1½d.

4. ANNUAL SUBSCRIBER.—There is no Unitarian Church in my district; what is the best way to establish regular meetings and services?—First get a list of names and addresses of all known Unitarians in the district; then call a meeting at one of their houses to consider whether regular meetings, week-day or Sunday, could not be started in a small way in turn at each others houses, better still if in some room that could be secured at little cost; at such meetings Unitarian doctrines might be discussed or Unitarian services held, the friends reading printed sermons and conducting service in turn.

5. PERPLEXED BIBLE READER.—I am puzzled to know why Jesus should be spoken of as the "Only begotten son" of God; can you give me any light on the point?—"Only begotten son" is used as a special term of endearment in the Scriptures not only of Jesus, but also of Isaac (Heb. x., 17), who was one of several brethren sons of Abraham. In such a case it cannot mean the "only" son. The corresponding Old Testament expression is translated "my darling," Psalms xxii., 20; xxv., 17. Everyone who loveth is said to be begotten of God (I. John, iv., 7), and holy men are spoken of as begotten of God (I. John, v., 18). So it cannot be taken literally to mean God's only son, for that would contradict the teaching of the Christian Scriptures throughout.

6. ORTHODOX INQUIRER.—Does not the fact that Jesus performed miracles prove that he was more than man?—The miracles said to have been performed by Elijah and other Old Testament prophets, or those attributed to Peter, Paul, and other Apostles, do not prove them to have been more than man. Roman Catholic saints have claimed to work miracles, and so have many others, but if they did, it would not make them superhuman. Why Jesus and not them?

7. HUMANITARIAN.—An increasing number of Unitarians out of all proportion to their comparative numbers become vegetarians; is there anything distinctive in Unitarian principles which specially favours a discontinuance of flesh-eating?—There is no doubt about it, for the Unitarian spirit of free inquiry and openness of mind promotes an interest in reforms of all kinds. Readiness to investigate new movements and new ideas inevitably leads to change; and the humanitarian character of Unitarian doctrines predisposes to a humane regard for the rights of animals and also for the prevention of avoidable suffering or disease.

8. SUNDAY SCHOOL TEACHER.—I doubt more and more the wisdom of an indiscriminate use of the Bible as a class-book in our Sunday Schools,—what advice would you give on that matter?—What is needed is a series of Bible Reading Books consisting of selections. Such class-books might well do much to solve the Bible difficulty also in the week-day public elementary schools.

9. REFORMER.—For a course of good reading in political and social reform you might do much worse than take advantage of the Reformer's Bookshelf Series. (See advert.)

10. BARROW-IN-FURNESS.—There are no Unitarian services carried on at present at Barrow-in-Furness; see answer to No. 4 above on starting services.

11. EAGER PROPAGANDIST.—First propagate a knowledge of Unitarian principles amongst Unitarians; the majority of church members and young people know and understand too little concerning their own Faith. Every Unitarian household ought to take in some Unitarian periodical regularly, whereas most Unitarian households never see one. The remedy is easy: find an enterprising youth; give him a list of names and addresses of Unitarians connected with your church or in your district; we will send him 100 copies of "Unity" for 3s. 6d. monthly, post free, and he will visit every address on the list monthly, and sell "Unity" at 1d. per copy; if he sell 100 he earns 4s. 10d. profit as wages for his labour, and good missionary work is effected. Every Church and Sunday School ought to secure such an agent.

I look on death to be as necessary to our constitutions as sleep. We shall rise refreshed in the morning.—Franklin.

Heaven is at hand just where we are—as near as our work is; the gate of heaven lies in the endeavour to do that work perfectly.—W. C. Gannett.

The Existence of Evil.

The Devil was invented as an attempt to explain the mystery of evil. Yet it is no explanation. If God made the Devil, and gave him an essentially evil character, God is responsible for what the Devil does. If the Devil has always existed as an independent power, we have two Gods, one good and one evil, as in the old Persian mythology; and if there were no other reason against such a belief, it is rendered impossible by modern science, which proclaims the unity of all creation, and leaves but one throne in the entire universe.

Why are we allowed the possibility of going wrong? The answer to this question lies in the fact that virtue is so great a good that it is worth running any needful risk in order to secure it; it is the pearl of great price; and by virtue we mean the free preference of that which is highest, though it is not the strongest or most pleasant. There is no virtue in telling the truth when it is to our worldly advantage to do so. For the virtue of truthfulness, the truth must be told entirely for its own sake. The saying, "Virtue is its own reward," means that there is nothing better which you may use virtue as a means to obtain; use virtue as a means to happiness, and it ceases to be virtue. If God gave us natures to which the higher course was always the stronger and the pleasanter, we should be very beautiful beings, but we should not be virtuous; there would be much to admire in us, but nothing to be morally approved. Why? Because there would be no opportunity for free choice, for voluntarily preferring what we know is right. There would be no temptation, no struggle, no effort; and without these things there would be no virtue.

God made sin possible, man made it actual; and God made sin possible because that is the only way in which virtue is possible. When sin is committed, degradation follows, conscience becomes weaker, and grievous suffering is caused both to the guilty and to many who are innocent. But God's part is to cause these sufferings to work together for good, warning the guilty, giving opportunities for penitence, helping the sinner to see the evil of his ways, and make him realise his folly and his sin. And to the innocent, suffering comes as trial, as opportunity for self-sacrifice and the putting forth of moral effort, as an occasion when real virtue may appear. Mark Tapley, who thought it was nothing to be jolly unless "under creditable circumstances," when anyone else would have been thoroughly down-hearted, is a good illustration of this truth, and Kingsley's "Ode to the North-Easter" is full of the same feeling.—Henry Shaen Solly, M.A., "Know Thyself" (Essex Hall).

God Helps Man.

God speaks to us by putting a new feeling in our soul, some feeling which we find in ourselves, but know is not of ourselves, some feeling for which we deserve no credit, but receive from an outside source. Have we had that experience? Have there been times when we ourselves were full of trouble and care, fretting under a misfortune, weary with present grief, or harassed about future ill; times when we could find no comfort in our own hearts, but when, having turned to God, and sought help from Him, we did receive help, we did find a peace which passeth understanding, which the world could neither give nor take away; when we found that peace in a new feeling within our soul, a feeling which we know has not come out of our troubled anxious heart, but has brought trust and comfort into that heart, and been as a sweet voice singing to us: "Oh, rest in the Lord, wait patiently for Him"; and enabling us at length to respond: "I waited patiently for the Lord; and He inclined unto me and heard my cry, and He hath put a new song into my mouth, even praise unto our God."

Have there been times when we were tempted to do something wrong, when we dreaded the temptation, because we knew that all our lower nature was pulling us towards it with a force which our higher nature was too weak to resist, when we turned to God and prayed for strength to overcome the temptation, and then found that we had strength sufficient for our need, when we heard the inner Voice saying, "Fear thou not, for I am with thee," and were at length able to respond, "With God all things are possible."—Henry Shaen Solly, M.A. "Know Thyself" (Essex Hall).

The Future Life.

Here is the special significance of the faith of Jesus Christ, the real fact which should be commemorated every Easter Sunday. It is not the resurrection of Christ's body that can give us the assurance of immortality, but the spiritual fact that Jesus had faith in the future life. If ever man spoke to God, it was Jesus; if ever man heard the word of God, and was given by God a message for this world, it was Jesus. As the prophet who has taught the foremost nations of the globe to believe that each human being is the child of God, as the son of God who realised the relationship of man to God, Jesus Christ must have known whether or not there is a future life, and his last words on the cross were those of triumphant faith: "Father, into Thy hands I commend my spirit."—Henry Shaen Solly, M.A. "Know Thyself" (Essex Hall).

"If a hearer, however honest he may be, has a prejudice against a speaker, it is never safe to take his report of what was said. The best of men will often slip into a statement, an inference of his own, which seems to him to be a natural consequence of the statement he is listening to, but which does not enter into the mind of the speaker, and indeed totally misrepresents him."

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I "am my brother's keeper." Gen. iv., 9.

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